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## BOOK REVIEWS

*Where did Life begin? A Brief Inquiry as to the Probable Place of Beginning and the Natural Courses of Migration therefrom of the Flora and Fauna of the Earth. A Monograph.* By GILBERT HILTON SCRIBNER. New edition. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1903.

This little book, which first appeared in 1883, is now republished without change except a new preface and a short appendix. The polar origin of life is so obvious a corollary from the nebular hypothesis that Kant or Laplace ought to have been the first to suggest it. It is possible that Buffon, who seems really to have been the first to propose it, in 1788, may have reached the idea through Kant's *Theory of the Heavens*, published in 1755. The strange thing is that the great biological thinkers, such as Huxley, Haeckel, and Herbert Spencer, did not at least discuss it. Professor Marsh in his presidential address to the American Association for the Advancement of Science at Saratoga in 1879, gave it a passing mention as confirmed by paleontological discoveries in America. This was about all the attention that the theory received down to the date of the first edition of this book. For the question of the origin of the flora and fauna of Europe, Asia, and America, which has indeed been long discussed and their migration from the arctic regions virtually proved, is quite a different question, as is also that of the southward migration of the human race, which has also been under discussion for about twenty years.

To any one who is convinced that the earth was once too hot to support life and gradually cooled down to its present state, there is no escape from the conclusion that life-supporting conditions first made their appearance at the poles. It would be rather gratuitous to maintain that, notwithstanding this, life did not in reality begin until such conditions had reached some lower latitude. It is much more rational to suppose that life began at the same time and place that the conditions favorable to it first made their appearance. Of the time we know very little, but the place was certainly at one pole or the other, and ultimately at both poles. And here arises a somewhat disquieting element for the confirmed monogenist. If life began at both poles, we certainly have two independent

series, and as there is practically no possibility that a north-pole type should be identical with a south-pole type, there must exist at least two great lines of descent for both the animal and the vegetable world. As to the former, if we assume that the vertebrate type coming down from the Vermes through Amphioxus, was a north-pole type, why may not the molluscan or the crustacean type be a south-pole type? As regards plants the case is more obscure, but it is at least a fair hypothesis that the remarkable "*Glossopteris flora*" of the southern hemisphere that flourished in late Paleozoic and early Mesozoic time, may have originated at the south pole.

As regards the polar, or at least northern origin of the human race, the readers of the *Anthropologist* do not need to have their attention called to the articles of the Marquis Saprota, based chiefly on the facts brought forward by De Mortillet, which appeared in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* in 1883, nor to the address of Prof. Edward S. Morse before the Section of Anthropology of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1884. But Mr Scribner has not ignored the human aspect of the question, though this, like the rest of the book, is purely theoretical, and no facts whatever are adduced. This is not a criticism of the book. In fact it is one of the beauties of it. The book is not large enough to record the facts, and its style and character would have been changed, I had almost said spoiled, by their introduction. Any one who reads the book can see that the author's head was full of facts, and that all he was trying to do was to reason from a store of facts to certain large conclusions. Those who speak disrespectfully of this method are often unable to make any use of their facts, however many they may possess. I do not hesitate to say that, if approached in the proper spirit, pages 51 to 53 of this book may be read with profit by all anthropologists.

LESTER F. WARD.

*A Guide to the Antiquities of the Bronze Age.* By CHARLES H. READ. British Museum. Printed by order of the Trustees. London: 1904. 8°, 160 pp., 148 figs.

This is a sequel to the volume published in 1902, under the title *Stone Age Guide*. The present book is devoted to remains in England, but it illustrates also the connections with the Continent. Again, the Bronze Age stands between the Iron Age on the hither side and the Stone Age on the far side. Well does the author say that metallurgy was the most important step in human progress between the invention of fire-making and the development of steam and electricity. The arguments